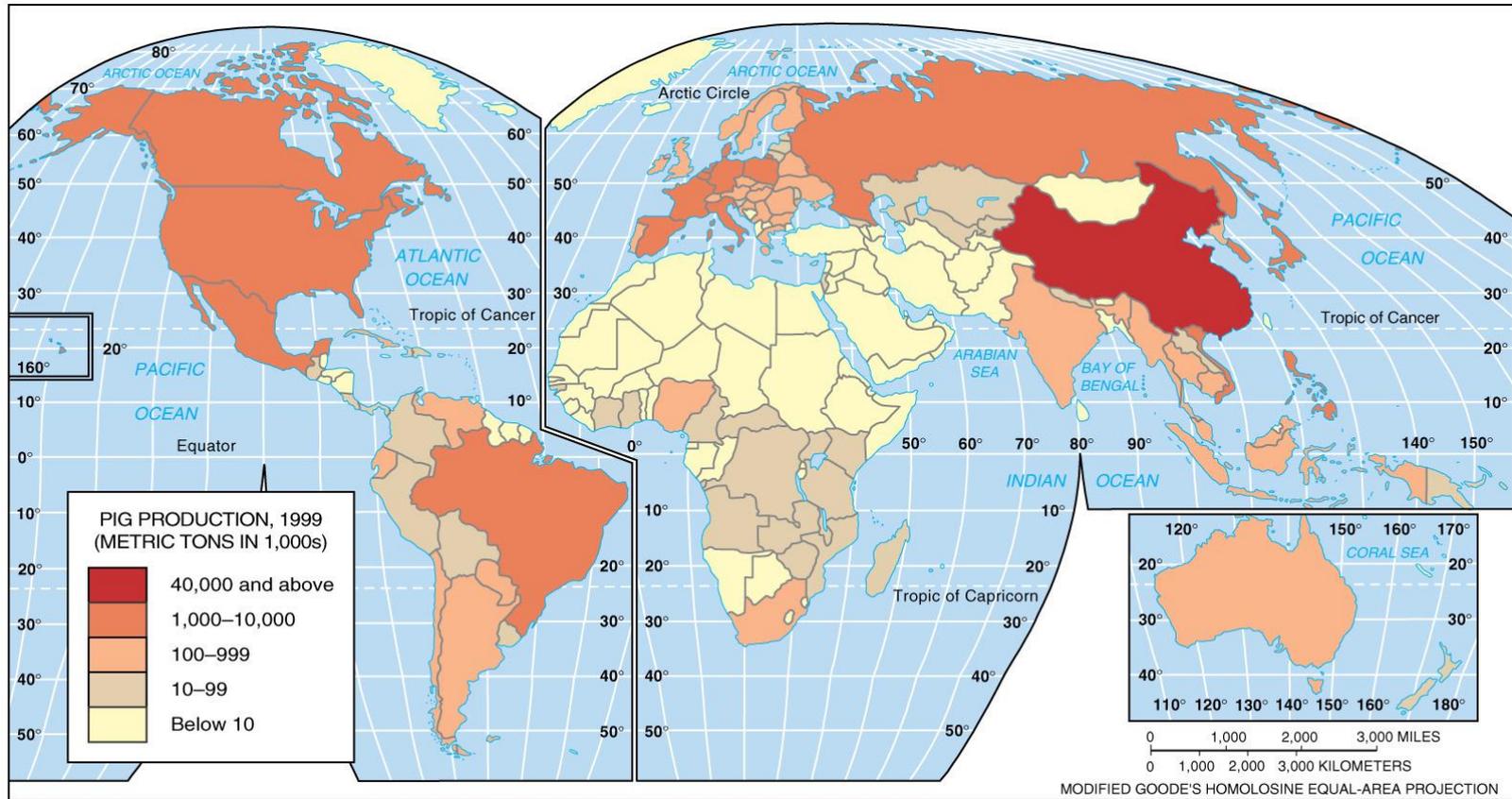


# Hog Production and Food Cultures



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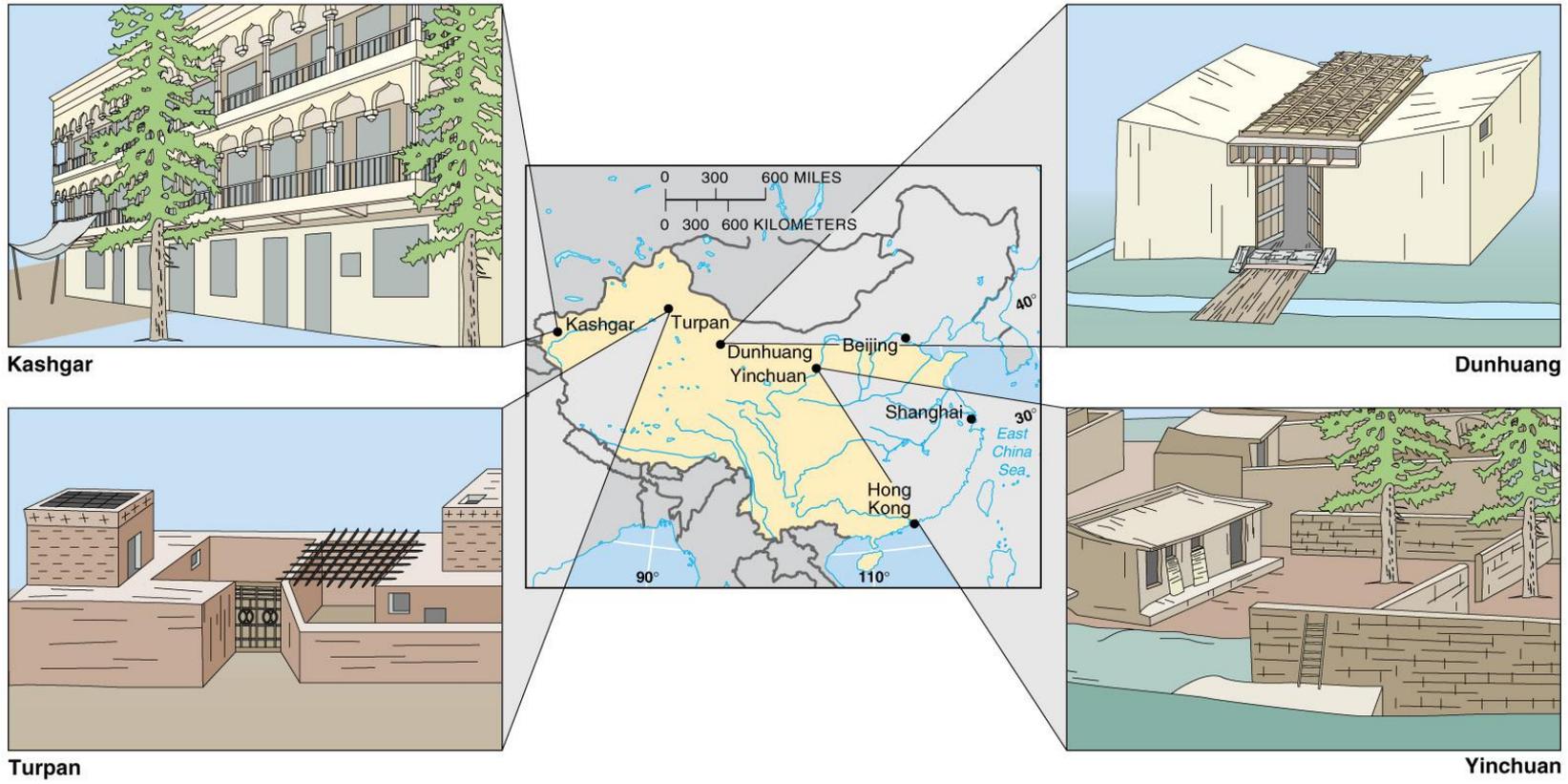
Fig. 4-6: Annual hog production is influenced by religious taboos against pork consumption in Islam and other religions. The highest production is in China, which is largely Buddhist.

# Food and Social Customs

- Other social customs, such as sexual practices, carry prohibitions, but taboos are especially strong in the area of food.
- Hindu taboos against consuming cows can also be explained partly for environmental reasons.
  - A large supply of oxen must be maintained in India, because every field has to be plowed at approximately the same time: when the monsoon rains arrive.
- But the taboo against consumption of meat among many people, including Muslims, Hindus, and Jews, cannot be explained primarily by environment factors.
- Social values must influence the choice of diet, because people in similar climates and with similar levels of income consume different foods.



# House Types in Western China



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Fig. 4-8: Four communities in western China all have distinctive house types.

# Distinctive Building Materials

- The two most common building materials in the world are wood and brick.
- The choice of building materials is influenced both by social factors and by what is available from the environment.

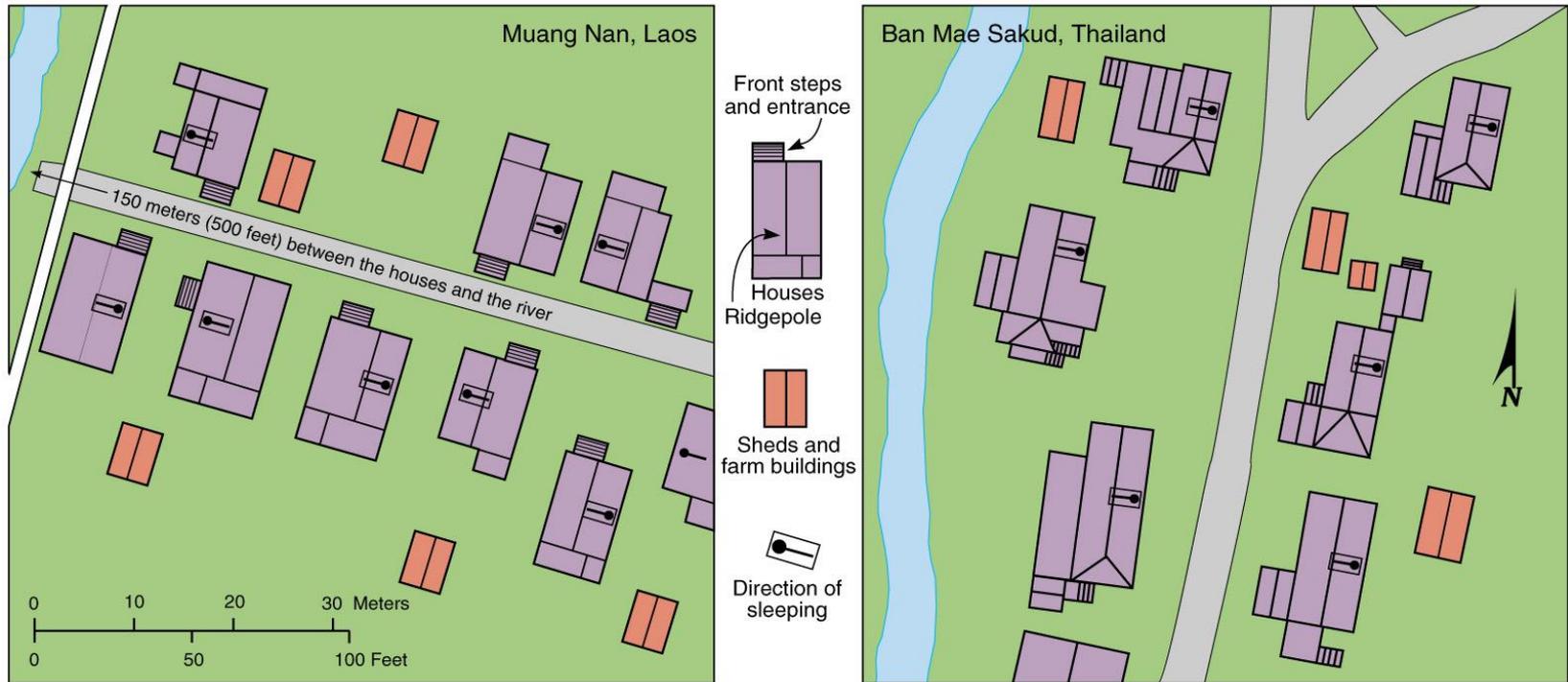


# Distinctive House Form and Orientation

- Social groups may share building materials, but the distinctive form of their houses may result from customary beliefs or environmental factors.
- The form of houses in some societies might reflect religious values.
- Beliefs govern the arrangement of household activities in a variety of Southeast Asian societies.



# Home Locations in Southeast Asia

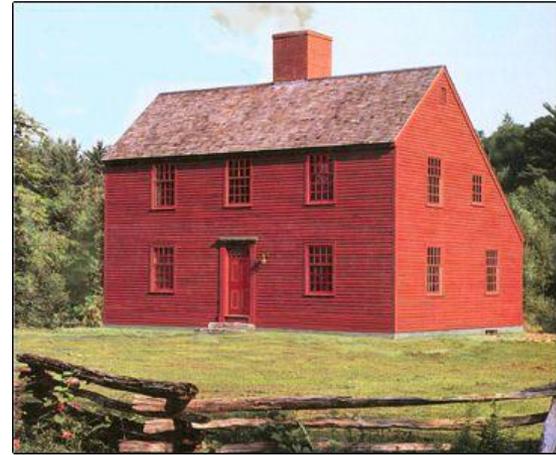


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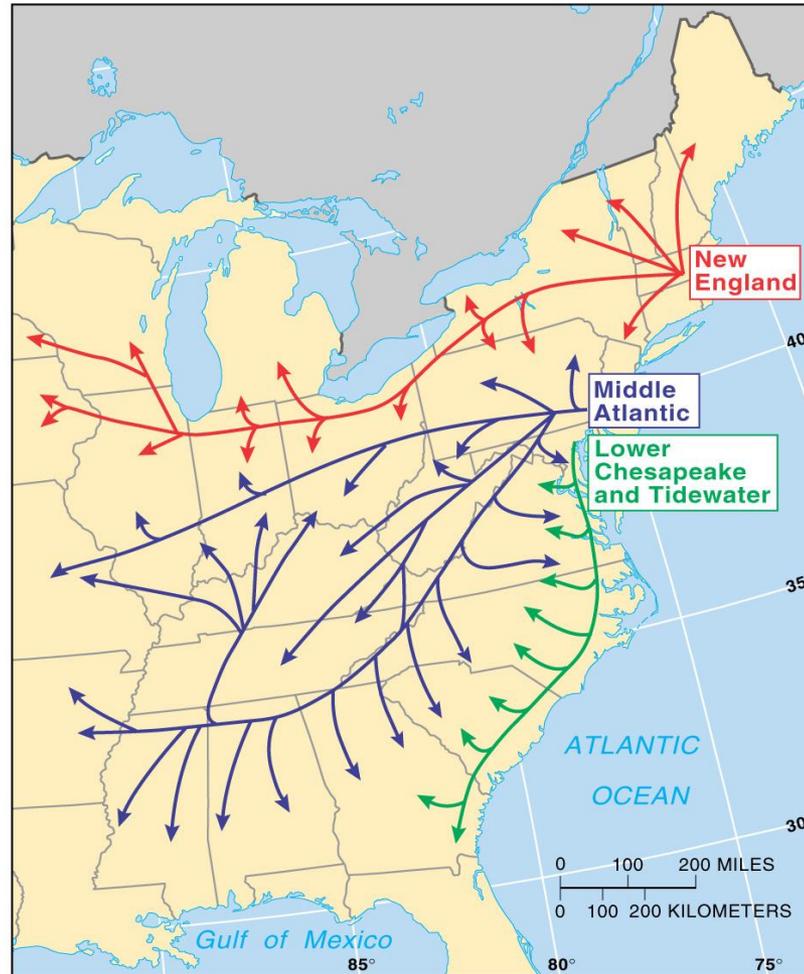
Fig. 4-7: Houses and sleeping positions are oriented according to local customs among the Lao in northern Laos (left) and the Yuan and Shan in northern Thailand (right).

# U.S. Folk House Forms

- Older houses in the United States display local folk-culture traditions.
- The style of pioneer homes reflected whatever upscale style was prevailing at the place on the East Coast from which they migrated.
- In contrast, houses built in the United States during the past half century display popular culture influences.



# Diffusion of House Types in U.S.



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Fig. 4-9: Distinct house types originated in three main source areas in the U.S. and then diffused into the interior as migrants moved west.

# Diffusion of New England House Types

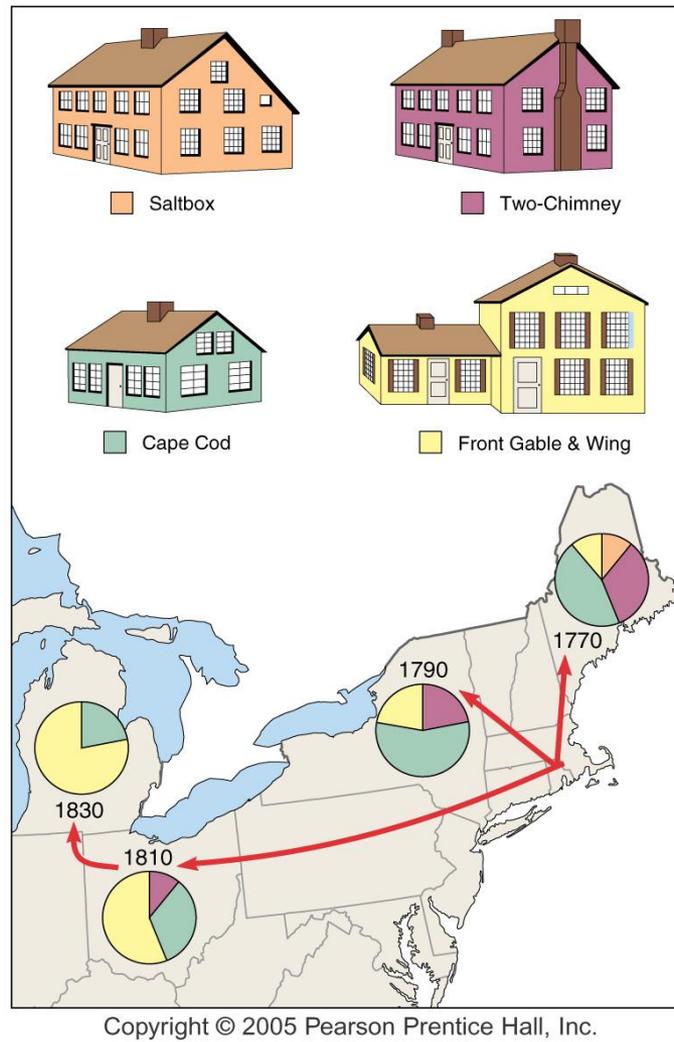


Fig. 4-10: Four main New England house types of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries diffused westward as settlers migrated.

# US Homes Today

- Today, such distinctions are relatively difficult to observe in the United States.
- Rapid communication and transportation systems provide people throughout the country with knowledge of alternative styles.
- Furthermore houses are usually mass-produced by construction companies.

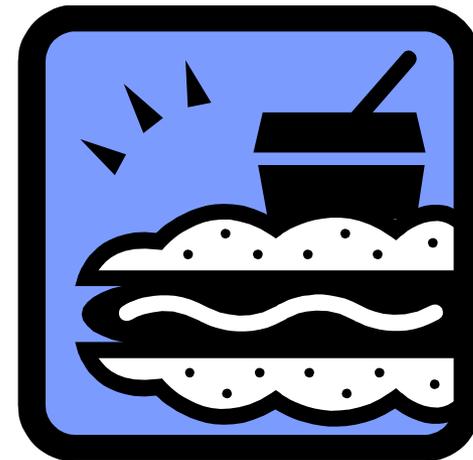


# Wide Dispersion of Popular Culture

- Diffusion of popular housing, clothing, and food
  - Popular housing styles
  - Rapid diffusion of clothing styles
  - Popular food customs
- Television and diffusion of popular culture
  - Diffusion of television
  - Diffusion of the internet
  - Government control of television

# Diffusion of Popular Housing, Clothing, and Food

- Some regional differences in food, clothing, and shelter persist in more developed countries, but differences are much less than in the past.

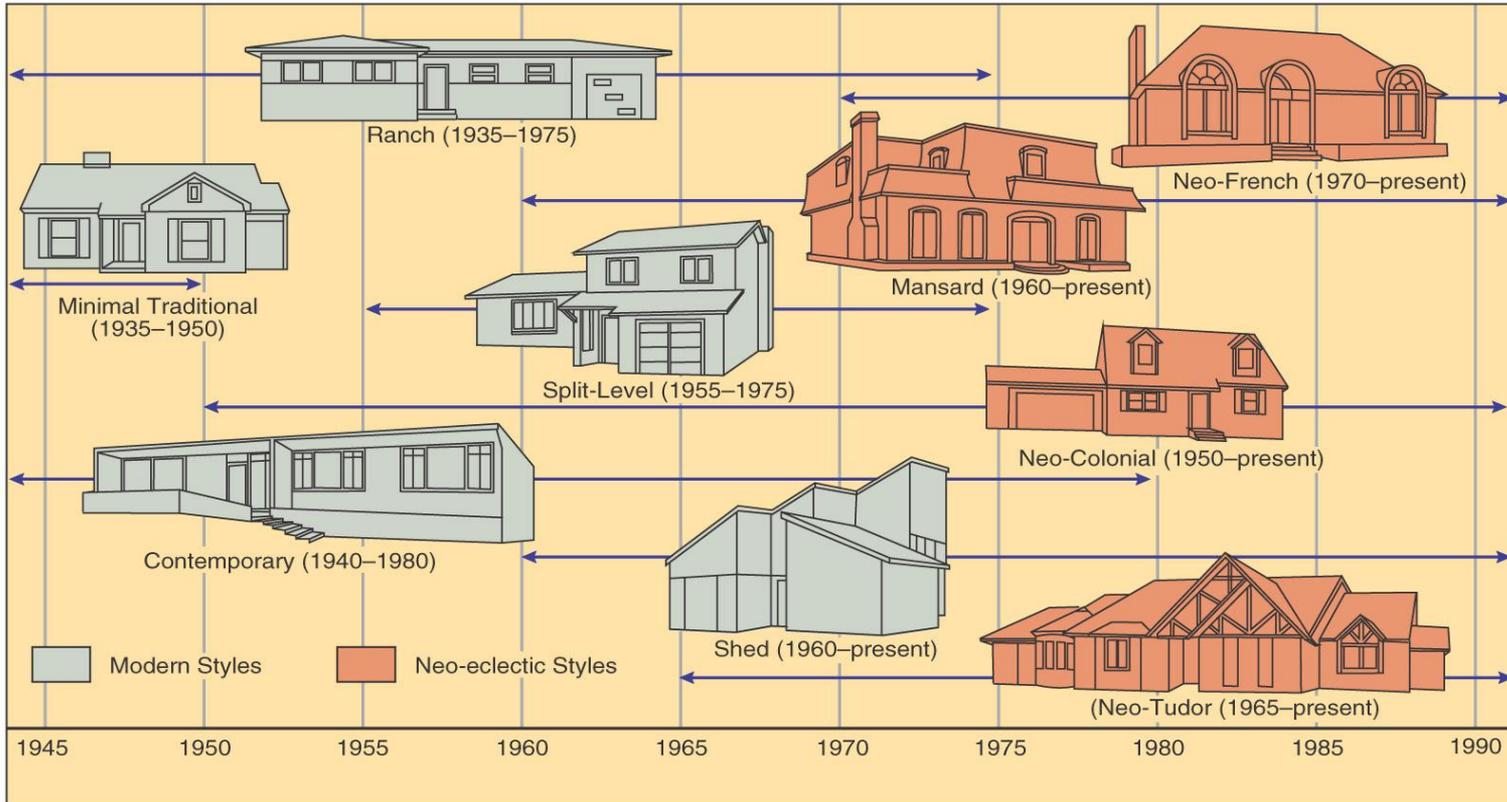


# Popular Housing Styles

- Housing built in the United States since the 1940s demonstrates how popular customs vary more in time than in place.
- In contrast with folk housing that is characteristic of the early 1800s, newer housing in the United States has been built to reflect rapidly changing fashion concerning the most suitable house form.
- In the years immediately after World War II most U.S. houses were built in a modern style.
- Since the 1960s, styles that architects call neo-eclectic have predominated.



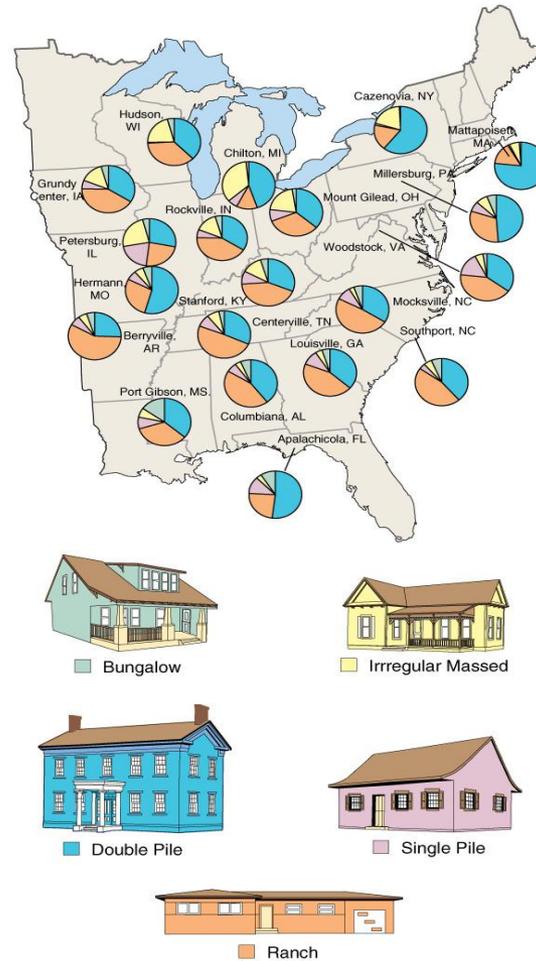
# U.S. House Types, 1945–1990



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Fig. 4-11: Several variations of the “modern style” were dominant from the 1940s into the 1970s. Since then, “neo-eclectic” styles have become the dominant type of house construction in the U.S.

# U.S. House Types by Region

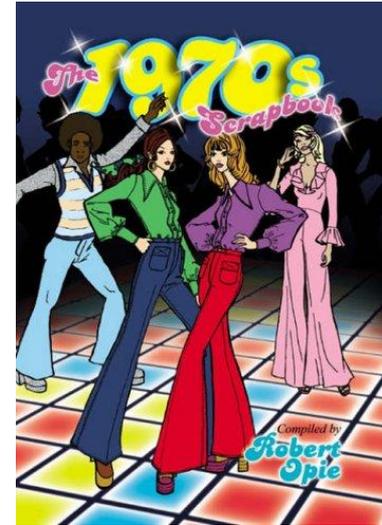


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Fig. 4-1-1: Small towns in different regions of the eastern U.S. have different combinations of five main house types.

# Rapid Diffusion of Clothing Styles

- Individual clothing habits reveal how popular culture can be distributed across the landscape with little regard for distinctive physical features.
- In the more developed countries clothing habits generally reflect occupations rather than particular environments.
- A second influence on clothing in MDCs is higher income.
- Improved communications have permitted the rapid diffusion of clothing styles from one region of Earth to another.



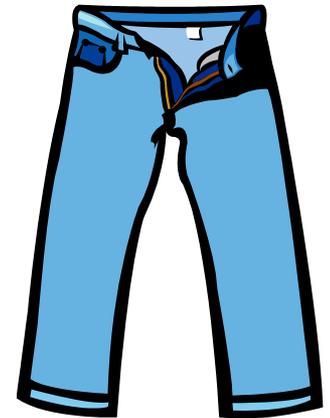
# Rapid Diffusion of Clothing Styles Continued

- Until recently, a year could elapse from the time an original dress was displayed to the time that inexpensive reproductions were available in the stores.
- Now the time lag is less than six weeks.
- The globalization of clothing styles has involved increasing awareness by North Americans and Europeans of the variety of folk costumes around the world.
- The continued use of folk costumes in some parts of the globe may persist not because of distinctive environmental conditions or traditional cultural values but to preserve past memories or to attract tourists.



# Blue Jeans

- An important symbol of the diffusion of western popular culture is jeans, which became a prized possession for young people throughout the world.
- Locally made denim trousers are available throughout Europe and Asia for under \$10, but “genuine” jeans made by Levi Strauss, priced at \$50 to \$100, are preferred as a status symbol.
- Jeans became an obsession and a status symbol among youth in the former Soviet Union, when the Communist government prevented their import.
- The scarcity of high-quality jeans was just one of many consumer problems that were important motives in the dismantling of Communist governments in Eastern Europe around 1990.

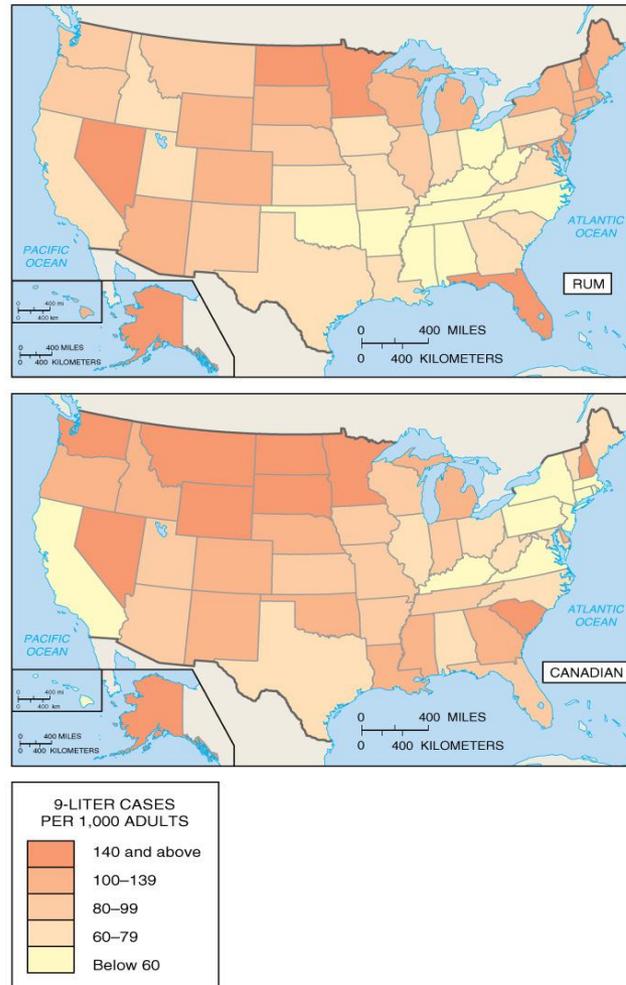


# Popular Food Customs

- People in a country with a more developed economy are likely to have the income, time, and inclination to facilitate greater adoption of popular culture.
- Consumption of large quantities of alcoholic beverages and snack foods are characteristic of the food customs of popular societies.
- Americans choose particular beverages or snacks in part on the basis of preference for what is produced, grown, or imported locally.
  - However, cultural backgrounds also affect the amount and types of alcohol and snack foods consumed.
- Geographers cannot explain all the regional variations in food preferences.



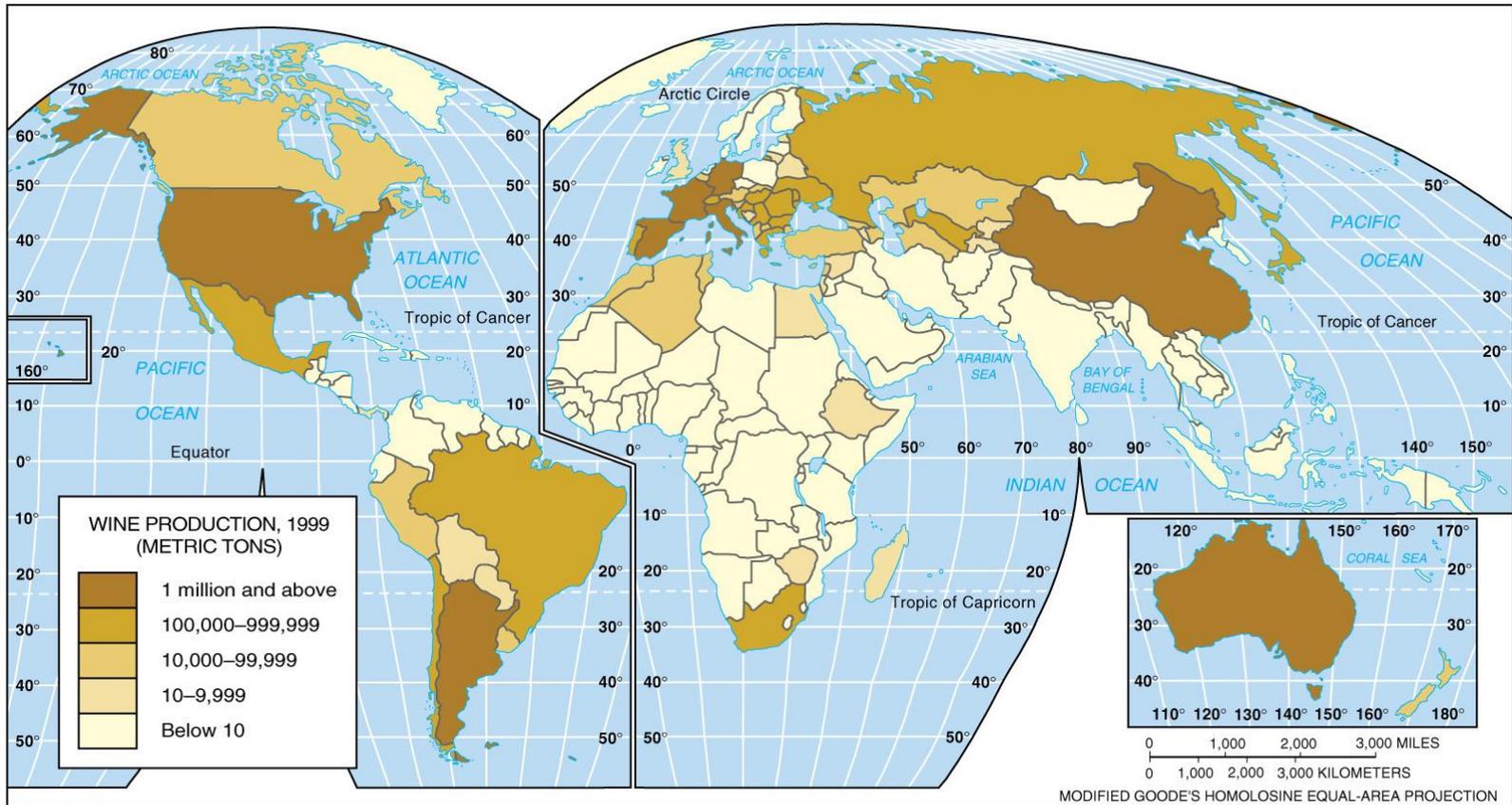
# Alcohol Preferences in the U.S.



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Fig. 4-12: Per capita consumption of rum (top) and Canadian whiskey (bottom) show different distributions and histories of diffusion.

# Wine Production per Year

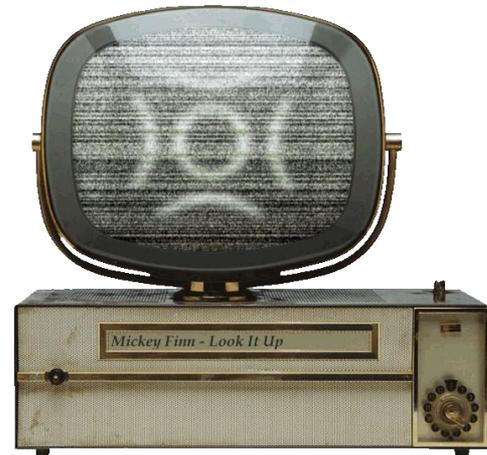


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Fig. 4-13: The distribution of wine production shows the joint impact of the physical environment and social customs.

# Role of Television in Diffusing Popular Culture

- Watching television is an especially significant popular custom for two reasons. First, it is the most popular leisure activity in more developed countries throughout the world. Second, television is the most important mechanism by which knowledge of popular culture, such as professional sports, is rapidly diffused across Earth.

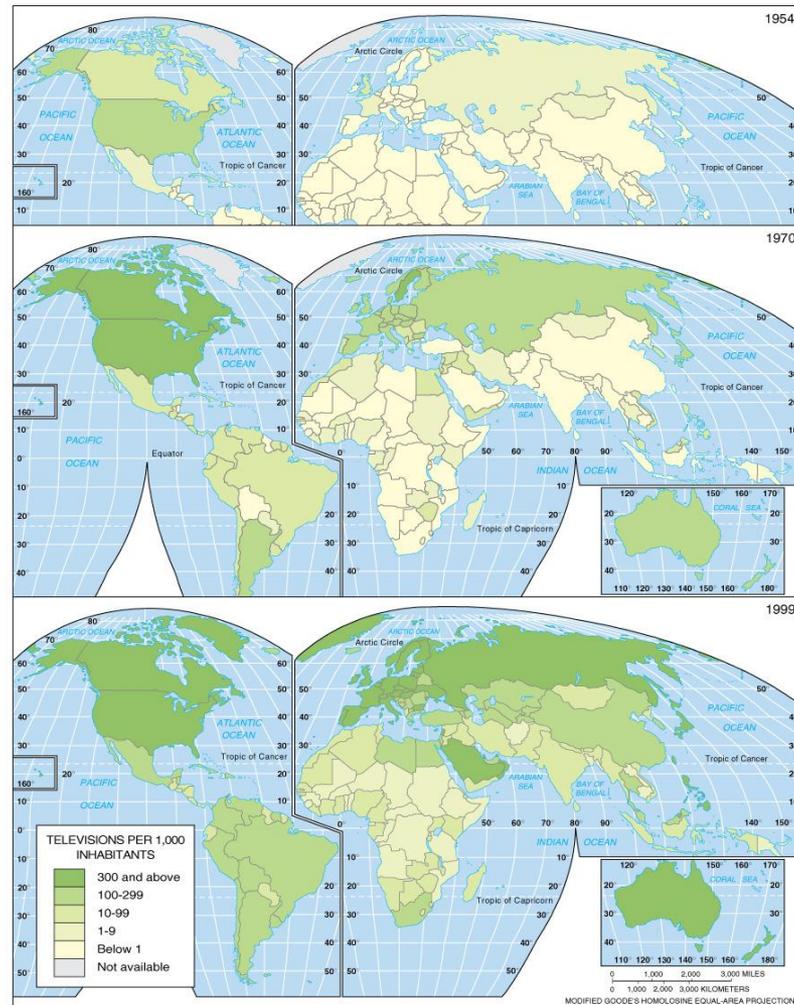


# Diffusion of Television

- Inventors in a number of countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union, simultaneously contributed to the development of television.
- The U.S. public first saw television in the 1930s. However, its diffusion was blocked for a number of years when broadcasting was curtailed or suspended entirely during World War II.



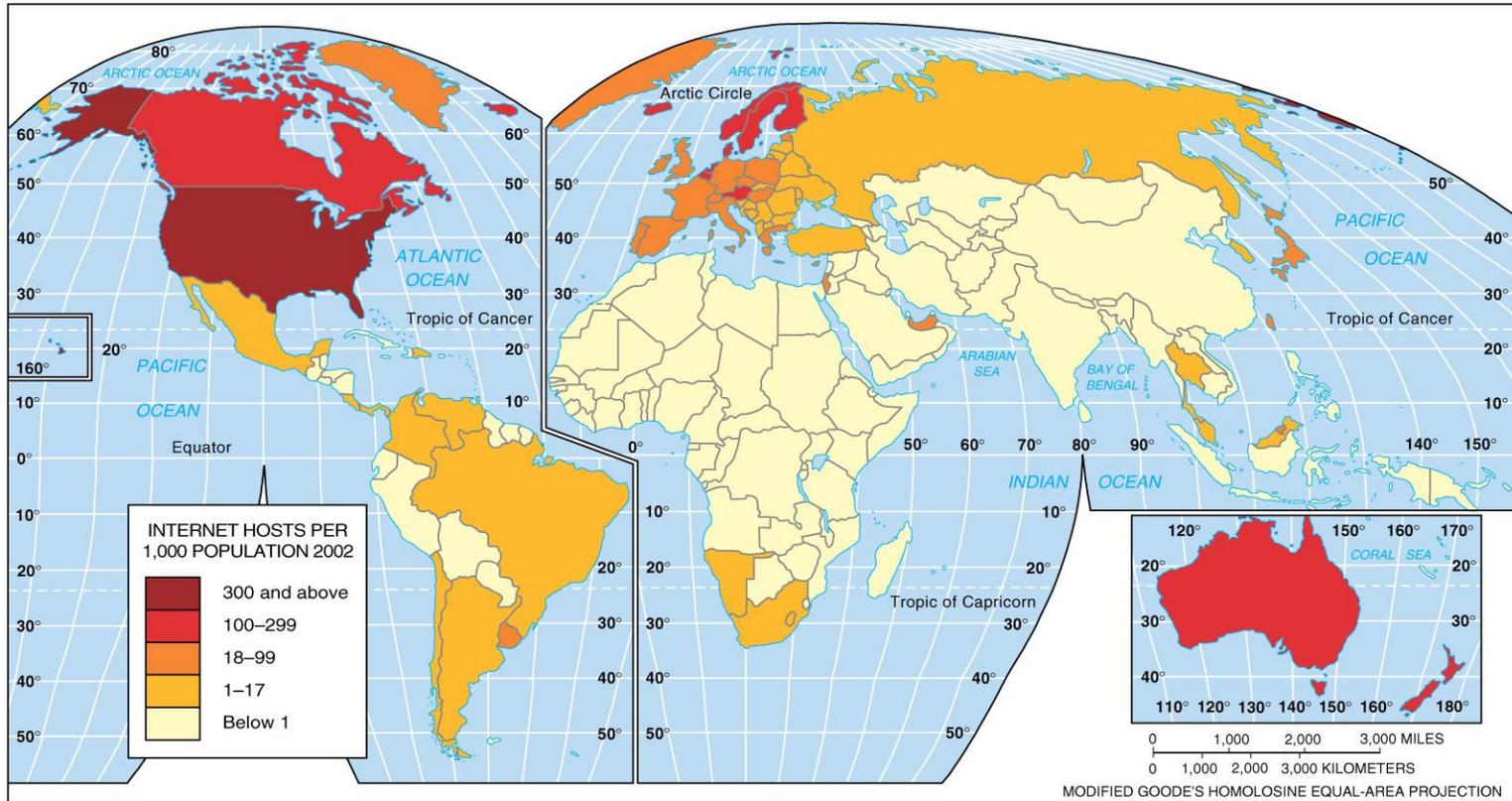
# Diffusion of TV, 1954–1999



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Fig. 4-14: Television has diffused widely since the 1950s, but some areas still have low numbers of TVs per population.

# Distribution of Internet Hosts



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Fig. 4-15: The U.S. had two-thirds of the world's internet hosts in 2002. Diffusion of internet service is likely to follow the pattern of TV diffusion, but the rate of this diffusion may differ.

# Government Control of Television

- In the United States most television stations are owned by private corporations.
- Some stations, however, are owned by local governments or other nonprofit organizations and are devoted to educational or noncommercial programs.
- In most countries the government(s) control TV stations to minimize the likelihood that programs hostile to current policies will be broadcast—in other words, they are censored.
  - Operating costs are typically paid by the national government from tax revenues, although some government-controlled stations do sell air time to private advertisers.
  - A number of Western European countries have transferred some government-controlled television stations to private companies.



# Reduced Government Control

- In the past, many governments viewed television as an important tool for fostering cultural integration.
- In recent years, changing technology—especially the diffusion of small satellite dishes—has made television a force for political change rather than stability.
- Governments have had little success in shutting down satellite technology.
- The diffusion of small satellite dishes hastened the collapse of Communist governments in Eastern Europe during the late 1980s.
- Facsimile machines, portable video recorders, and cellular telephones have also put chinks in government censorship.



# Key Issue 4: Impacts of the Globalization of Popular Culture

- Threats to folk culture
  - Loss of traditional values
  - Foreign media dominance
- Environmental impacts of popular culture
  - Modifying nature
  - Uniform landscapes
  - Negative environmental impact

# Threat to Folk Culture

- The international diffusion of popular culture has led to two problems.
  - First, the diffusion of popular culture may threaten the survival of traditional folk culture in many countries.
  - Second, popular culture may be less responsive to the diversity of local environments and consequently may generate adverse environmental impacts.
- When people turn from folk to popular culture, they may also turn away from the society's traditional values.



# Loss of Traditional Values

- One example of the symbolic importance of folk culture is clothing.
- In African and Asian countries today, there is a contrast between the clothes of rural farm workers and of urban business and government leaders.
- The Western business suit has been accepted as the uniform for business executives and bureaucrats around the world.
- Wearing clothes typical of MDCs is controversial in some Middle Eastern countries.



# Change in Traditional Role of Women

- The global diffusion of popular culture threatens the subservience of women to men that is embedded in many folk customs.
- The concepts of legal equality and availability of economic and social opportunities outside the home have become widely accepted in more developed countries, even where women in reality continue to suffer from discriminatory practices.
- However, contact with popular culture also has brought negative impacts for women in less developed countries, such as an increase in prostitution.
- International prostitution is encouraged in (some) countries as a major source of foreign currency.



# Threat of Foreign Media Imperialism

- Leaders of some LDCs consider the dominance of popular customs by MDCs as a threat to their independence.
- Leaders of many LDCs view the spread of television as a new method of economic and cultural imperialism on the part of the more developed countries, especially the United States.



# Western Control of News Media

- Less developed countries fear the effects of the newsgathering capability of the media even more than their entertainment function.
- Many African and Asian government officials criticize the Western concept of freedom of the press.
- They argue that the American news organizations reflect American values and do not provide a balanced, accurate view of other countries.
- In many regions of the world the only reliable and unbiased news accounts come from the BBC World Service shortwave radio newscasts.

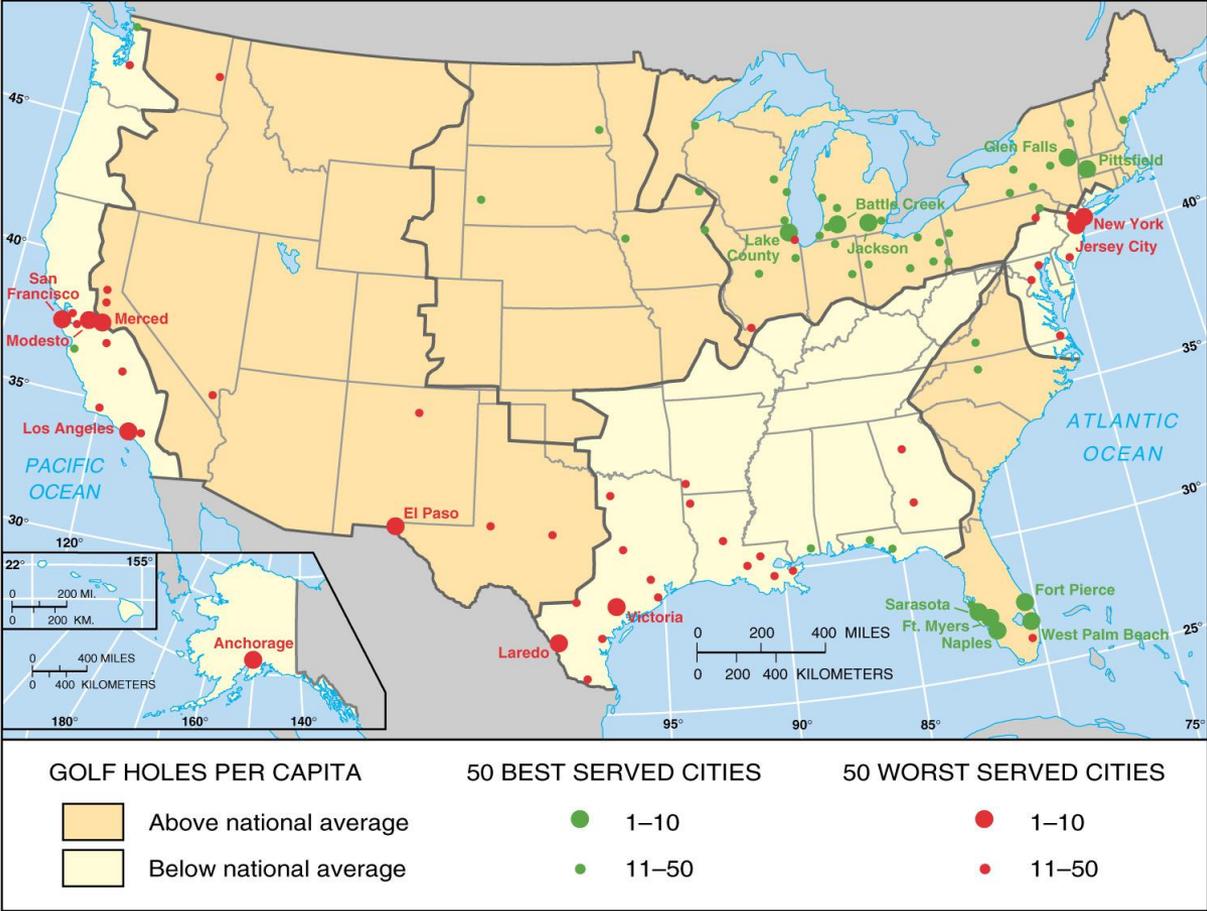


# Environmental Impact of Popular Culture

- Popular culture is less likely than folk culture to be distributed with consideration for physical features.
- Popular culture can significantly modify or control the environment.
- It may be imposed on the environment rather than springing forth from it, as with many folk customs.



# Golf Courses in Metropolitan Areas



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Fig. 4-16: The 50 best-served and worst-served metropolitan areas in terms of golf holes per capita, and areas that are above and below average.

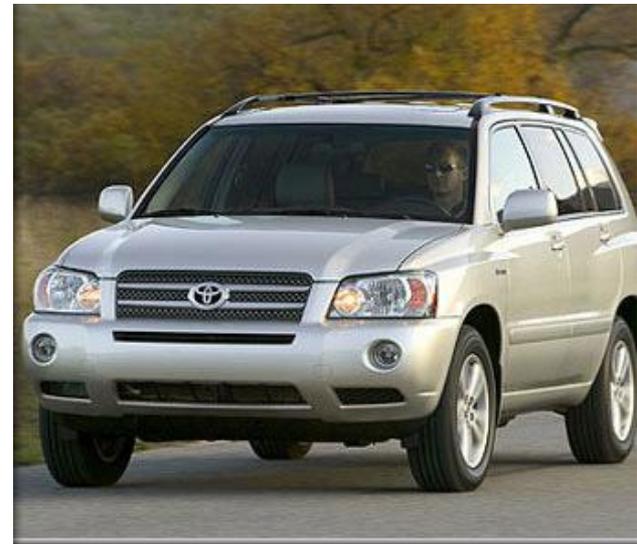
# Uniform Landscapes

- The distribution of popular culture around the world tends to produce more uniform landscapes.
- In fact, promoters of popular culture want a uniform appearance to generate “product recognition” and greater consumption.
- The diffusion of fast-food restaurants is a good example of such uniformity.
- The success of fast-food restaurants depends on large-scale mobility.



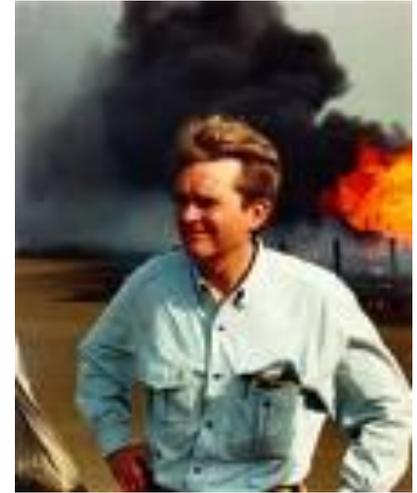
# Global Diffusion of Uniform Landscapes

- Uniformity in the appearance of the landscape is promoted by a wide variety of other popular structures in North America, such as gas stations, supermarkets, and motels.
- These structures are designed so that both local residents and visitors immediately recognize the purpose of the building, even if not the name of the company.
- Diffusion of popular culture across Earth is not confined to products that originate in North America.
- Japanese automobiles and electronics, for example, have diffused in recent years to the rest of the world, including North America.



# Negative Environmental Impact

- The diffusion of some popular customs can adversely impact environmental quality in two ways: depletion of scarce natural resources and pollution of the landscape.
- Diffusion of some popular customs increases demand for raw materials.
- Increased demand for some products can strain the capacity of the environment.
- With a large percentage of the world's population undernourished, some question inefficient use of grain to feed animals for eventual human consumption.



# Pollution

- Popular culture also can pollute the environment.
- Folk culture, like popular culture, can also cause environmental damage, especially when natural processes are ignored.
- A widespread belief exists that indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere practiced more “natural,” ecologically sensitive agriculture before the arrival of Columbus and other Europeans.
- Geographers increasingly question this.
  - Very high rates of soil erosion have been documented in Central America from the practice of folk culture.



# Chapter 4: Folk and Popular Culture

The End